



وزارة النقل والاتصالات
Ministry of Transport & Communications



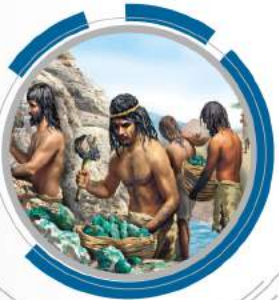
التراث البحري العماني Oman Maritime Heritage

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Minister of Transport & Communications
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Oman Maritime Through the Ages

Stone Age



Bronze Age



Iron Age



Middle Ages



The Reign of
Yaraibies & AlBusaidis



The Blessed
Renaissance
(1970)





Oman Geographic Location

- Key location
- Communicating and connecting with ancient civilizations
- Key role in the history of maritime trade





Oman Geographic Location

Historical Oman's borders

- .
- .
- .

Significantly wider than today





Stone Age: Maritime Navigation

☼ The discovery of stone tools—dated to (60,000 years BC) at the site of Ankitat in Samahram of Dhofar—is a concrete evidence of human activities at the coastal areas at that time.





Stone Age: Maritime Navigation



Part of a Whale Jaw discovered in Suwaih site



Traditional primitive fishing tools used before shifting to deep sea fishing gear such as various size fishing hooks for catching big fish like Tuna.



Manufacturing stages of shell fish hooks (Ras Al Had in the New Stone Age)



Stone Age: Copper Mining Age

☼ Using copper in Oman started since the New Stone Age (7,000 - 6,000 BC)

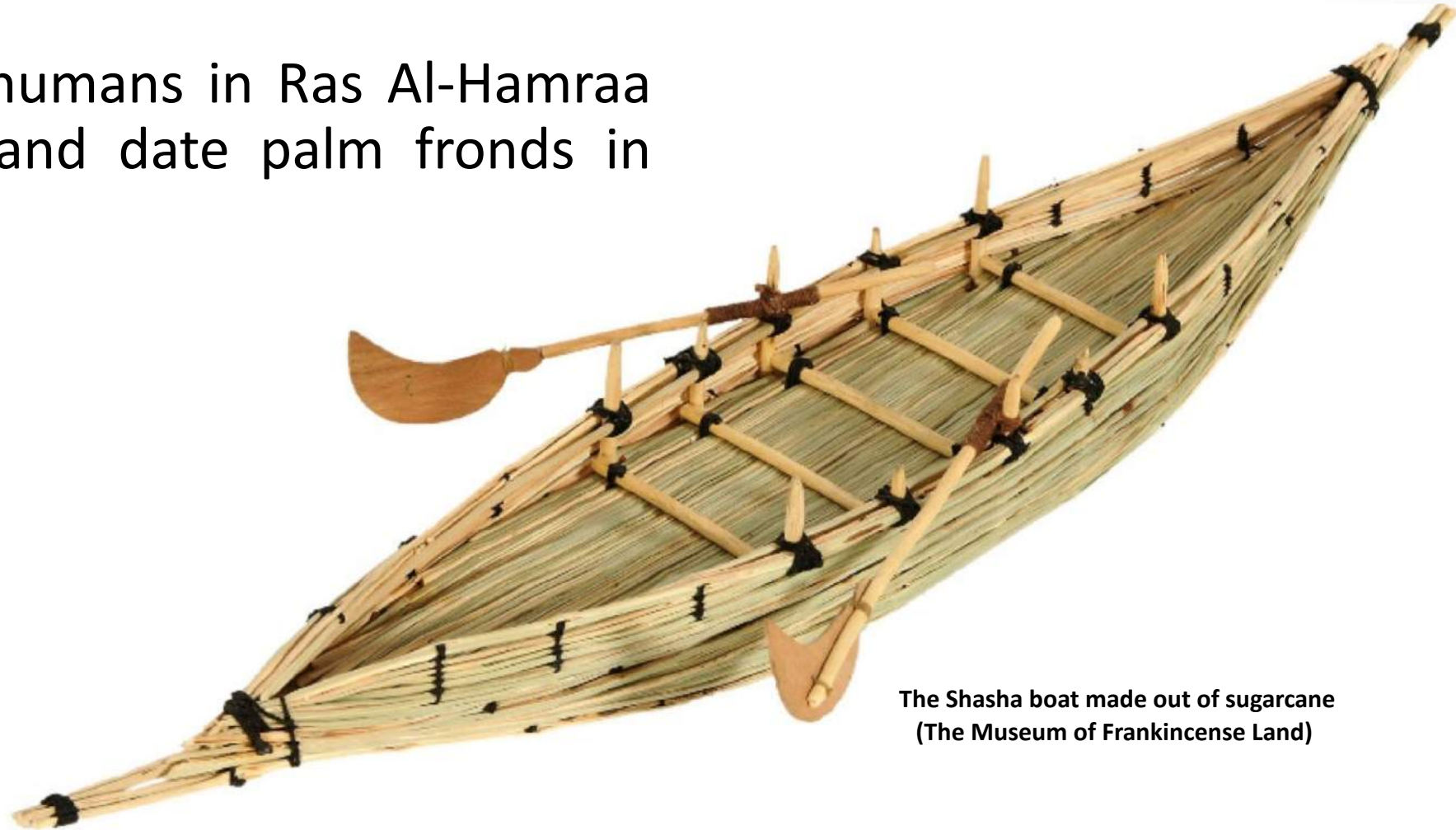
☼ Copper industry developed within the local community- helping the coastal colonies to evolve





Stone Age: Cane Boats

⚓ Since 5,000 BC, humans in Ras Al-Hamraa used sugarcane and date palm fronds in building boats.



The Shasha boat made out of sugarcane
(The Museum of Frankincense Land)



Bronze Age

- ☸ Construction of boats and ships evolved to sail longer distances (3000-1300 BC).
- ☸ Oman, known as “Majan”, became a maritime trading route and one of the most significant transit hubs in the ancient world.
- ☸ Merchants were skilled in maritime navigation.
- ☸ Maritime trade required seals, weights and documented contracts.



Map showing ancient world civilizations in the



Seal found at the site of the fortress of Slot archaeological the third millennium BC



Bronze Age: Maritime Relations with the Ancient Civilizations

☼ Oman was a strong business alley with ancient civilizations.

☼ Omani ports were used to store the eastern goods (gold, silver and Ivory), imported from the Indus Valley to be distributed in the regional ports like; Sumerian and Akkadian cities.

☼ Scripts also documented the arrival of Pharos' ships to the ports of Oman.



Maritime Trading Routes between the ancient civilizations during the Bronze age



Virtual photo of Majan ships during the Bronze age



Bronze Age:

Majan Civilization maritime relation with the Mesopotamian Civilization



Queen Shamsaa (the Queen of Oman) made a trade agreement with the Akkadian King “Sargon” in 2234 BC; 5400 men sailed from Oman to Mesopotamia in 34 trips.



The successors of King Sargon tried to extend their authority on the maritime trade lines; “King Manishtusu” (2292-2306 BC).



Majan goods were essential in trading with Mesopotamia until the end of the 2000 BC.



Queen Shamsa sail from Majan to Mesopotamia



Bronze Age:

Majan Civilization maritime relation with Ancient Egypt

- ☸ Ancient scripts discovered in Egypt documented the cultural and commercial relationships between Oman and Ancient Egypt
- ☸ Sacred sailing trips to the Land of Frankincense, known to the Pharos as “the Land of God”, exporting of Frankincense “Luban”.



Egyptian Pharos using Frankincense





Bronze Age:

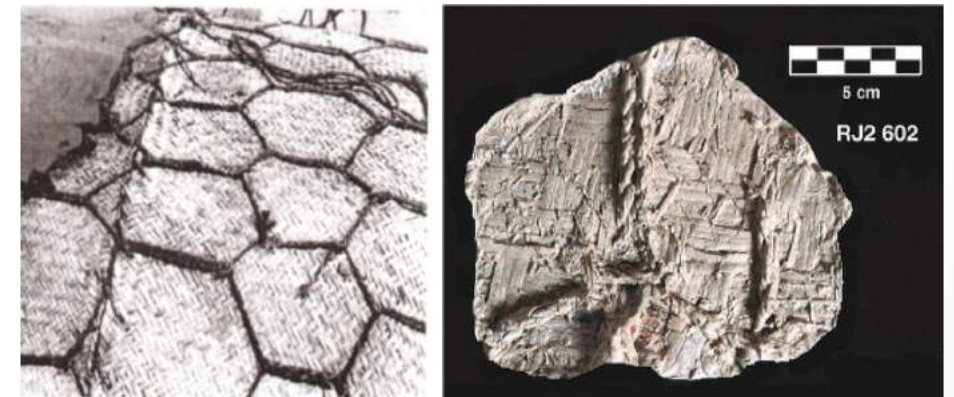
Majan Civilization maritime relation with Indus Valley civilization

☸ Oman (Majan) had solid commercial ties with the Civilization of the Indus Valley since the New Stone Age and continued during the Bronze Age (2600-1900 BC).



Construction of the ship Majan

☸ Sugarcane boats coated with bitumen were commonly used by the inhabitants of the coastal areas of Oman since 3400 BC and during the Bronze age.



Prints of Sugarcane stacks and bitumen coated plates that were used to make trade ships (Ras Al Jinz)



Iron Age: Omani ports and harbors



The Omani maritime navigation during the Iron Age (1300BC – 525 AD) was distinguished by its vibrant trading activity with other civilizations.



Oman was described by historians and travelers like Alexander the Great, Yaqoot Alhamawy, Alazhari, Greek and Roman maps as
“The South Eastern Territory of the Arabian Peninsula”.

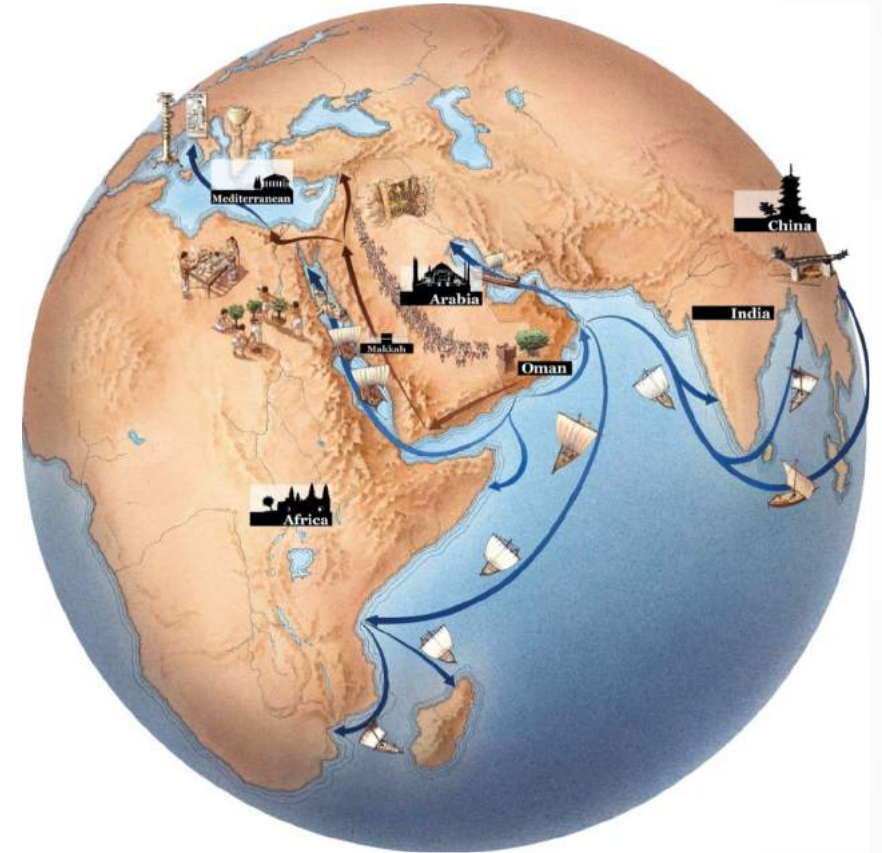


Ptolemy's map of the Arabian Peninsula (200 AD)



Iron Age: Omani ports and harbors

- ⚓ The Omani Frankincense (Luban) is one of the best selling products in the Iron Age.
- ⚓ The high demand on frankincense led moving fleets to search for its sources, concluding with a failing Roman campaign against Arabia in 24 BC.
- ⚓ Incense (Bakhoor) and Frankincense as the common presents of Arabia to the Assyrian kings during the 8th and 7th centuries BC.



Frankincense trading routes between the East and the West



Iron Age: Omani ports and harbors



Trading activities continued through the Omani ports that connected the East to the West.



The most popular ports and harbors: Maka (**Ras Al Had**), Osara (**Raysut**), Moshka Liman (**Samahram**), Orgis, Orakta, Organa, Saris (**Island of Masirah**), **Qalhat**, Muscanos (**Muscat**), **Sohar**, Dabangoris (**Daba**), Bitrasafafa (**Seeb**).



Locations of the Omani ports during the Iron Age



Iron Age: Omani ports and harbors



Maka (**Ras Al Had**) port was one of the Early Iron Age Omani ports. Cinnamon and other spices were exported from Makita harbor to the land of Assyria.



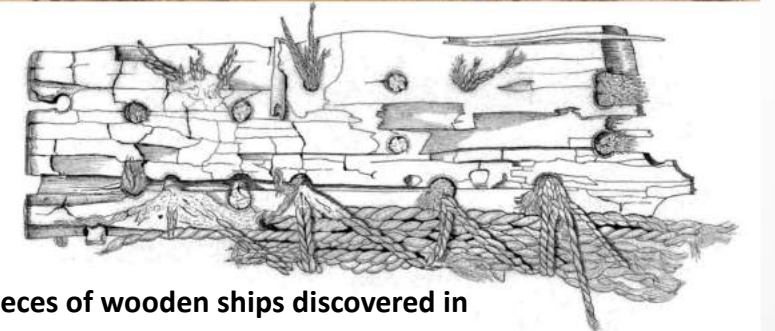
Port of **Raysut** harbored big ships and was used for exporting Frankincense. Chinese ships loaded with silk, Camphor, musk and spices sail to Raysut port.



Samahram port's unique location-overlooking the Indian Ocean- made it a global port, connected to all known parts of the world at that time (Arabian Peninsula, Gulf, Asia, Mediterian Sea countries, Egypt, and Aksum).



Maritime Navigation in Samahram during the Iron Age



Pieces of wooden ships discovered in Al-Baleed Archeological Site



Iron Age: Omani ports and harbors

- ☪ Wood panels belonging to ancient boats and ships were discovered in **Al Baleed** site. Anchors of big ships were also discovered dated to the Bronze and the Iron Age.
- ☪ Port of **Qalhat** has a strategic location on the maritime trading routes between Oman and the Gulf, and between India and East Africa and the Red Sea.
- ☪ Port of **Muscat** was the main port for Omanis in 180 AD and was popular for exporting Nutmeg. Its location connected all parts of Oman.



Ships wooden panels discovered in Al Baleed site



Virtual photo of Al Baleed



Iron Age: Omani ports and harbors



Port of Sohar is an Omani port connecting ports of India, china, South Arabia, and East Africa. Studies show that copper smelting took place in Sohar, to be then exported from the port of Sohar.



Port of Daba was one of the famous Omani ports. Merchants from Sindh, India, China, the East and the West traded in Daba market .



The role of winter seasonal winds in the Omani maritime navigation



The role of the Summer seasonal winds in the Omani maritime navigation



Maritime Silk Route



The world civilizations used a network of land and sea trading routes for exchanging silk and spices from and to China.



This routes network expanded at the beginning of the Middle Ages when Omani ships sailed since the 8th Century exploring new trading routes through the Indian Ocean. Since then, Oman maintained strong maritime trade ties with China.



The Silk Routes were passages to exchange trade, culture and knowledge between nations.



Omani trading ships in Chinese port

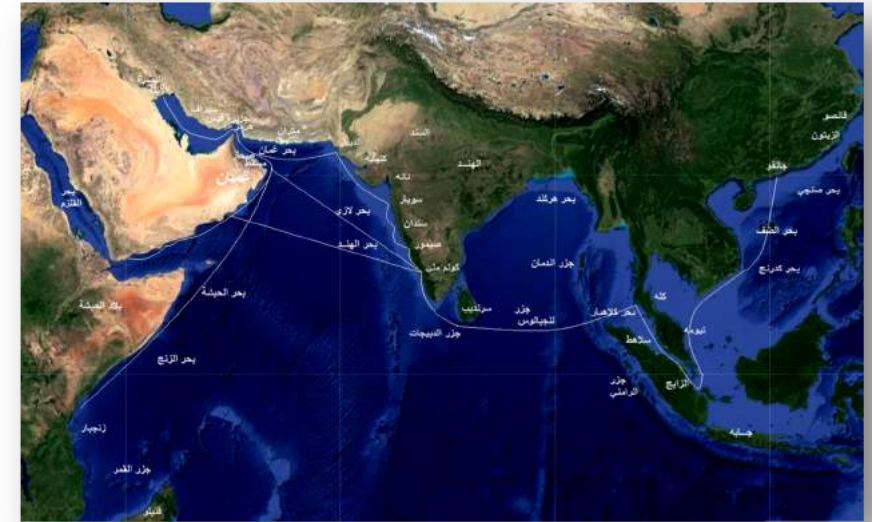


Land and sea routes used for silk and spices trade



Middle Ages: Maritime Navigation

- Trading activities and maritime navigation flourished as Omani ships sailed to the ports of India, Malabar Coast, Singapore, Sri Lanka, the Maldives, the Bay of Bengal to the Malay archipelago, Sumatra Island, the island of Java, the islands of the Andaman, the Andaman Islands, Borneo Island, and the Philippines.
- By the 9th century, trading between Oman and China became more active.
- Famous Omani sailors in this period: Abu Obaida Abdullah Bin Al Qassim who sailed to the port of Guangzhou (Canton) in China in 750 AD.
- Trade reached its peak especially Frankincense and Incense.



Oman Maritime routes to the Far East and East Africa



Sheikh Abullah (Omani) received by the Emperor of China Jin-Song (1050 AD) painted by Professor Harper Jhonson



Middle Ages: Maritime Navigation



Omanis' knowledge about East Africa Coastal areas and their navigation experience enabled them to make two regular trips every year to these coasts; one in November and the other in April of every year.



Omanis established the Emirate of Lamu in 702 AD to be the first Arabic emirate in East Africa.



In the reign of the Imama Al Mohanna Bin Jaifar Al Kharousi (840-851 AD), a large naval fleet consisting of 300 armed warships was established.



Immigration of the Sons of Al Julanda to the African coasts

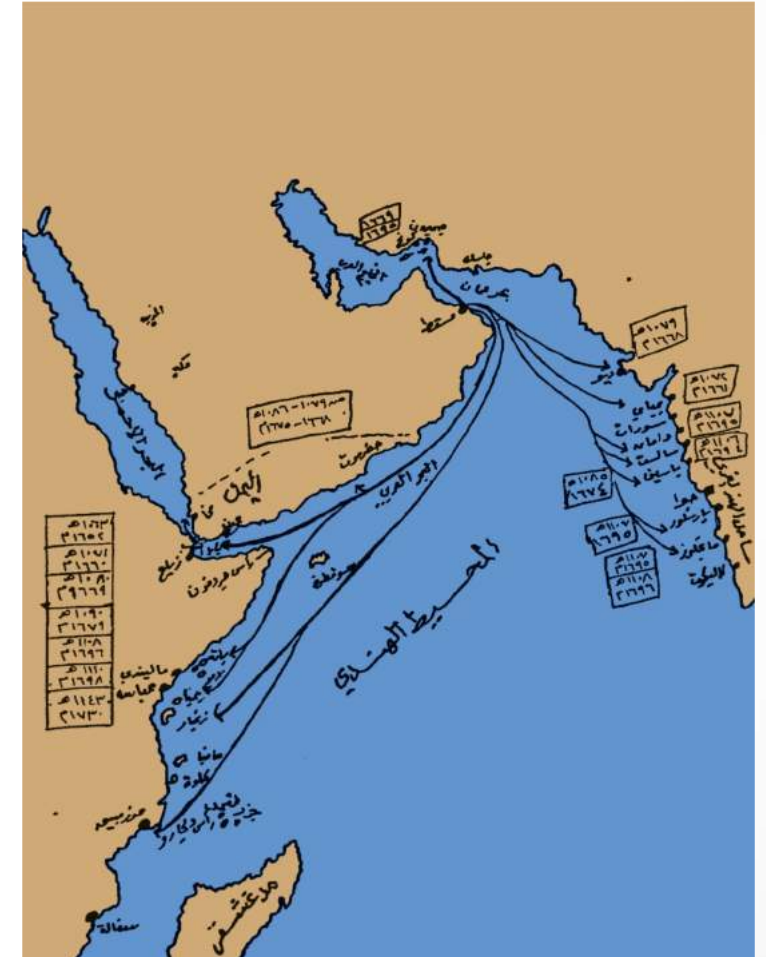


Ships manufacturing in Oman



The Reign of Yaraibies: Oman Navel Fleet and Maritime Navigation

- European ambitions emerged to dominate East trade.
- Portuguese gained control of the navigation routes and coasts of the Arabian Gulf, Indian Ocean, and East Africa.
- The International Trading Route was shifted from the Gulf and the Red Sea to the Cape of Good Hope.
- British presence started in 1600 AD, Dutch in 1602.
- Omanis united and formed a strong naval fleet to fight and drive out European naval forces under the leadership of Imam Nasser bin Murshid Al-Yaraibi (1624 AD).



Omais Naval battles against Portuguese



The Reign of Yaraibies: Oman Navel Fleet and Maritime Navigation



The Omani Navy

**1650
AD**

Driven Portuguese out of their last stronghold in Muttrah and Muscat. Chased the Portuguese completely out of the Arabian Gulf.

**1660
AD**

Freed Vasa, located on the coasts of East Africa.

**1698
AD**

Liberated Mombasa and lead to the evacuation of all Portuguese forces from Bemba, Kloh, Bata and Zanzibar.

The Omani navy at the beginning of the 18th century had become superior to any other naval force. - The English historian Copeland.



The Reign of AlBusaidis: Oman Navel Fleet and Maritime Navigation

⚓ During the reign of Imam Ahmad bin Saeed (1744 AD), Oman continued to consolidate its status and prestige, making the Dutch and English authorities recognize the Omani sovereignty over many of the shores of the Gulf and the Indian Ocean.

⚓ In 1775 AD, the Persians surrounded Basra and their people sought rescue from Imam Ahmed bin Said, who equipped a naval fleet and managed to free the port.



The Omani Fleet while liberating Basra



The Reign of AlBusaidis:

Oman Navel Fleet during the reign of Sultan Saeed bin Sultan

⚓ During the first half of the nineteenth century, the Omani fleet became the second largest naval fleet in the Indian Ocean, after the British fleet.

⚓ Sultan Said bin Sultan (1804-1856 AD) using his influence and authority of his country expanded to form a large empire that includes all areas from the north-east coast of the Gulf to the east coasts of Africa (from Bandar Abbas to Zanzibar).



The Omani Empire during the reign of Sultan Said Bin Sultan
(1804-1856)



The Reign of AlBusaidis:

Oman Navel Fleet during the reign of Sultan Saeed bin Sultan



The Omani Naval fleet were built in Omani docks in Muttrah, Muscat, Sur, and Shinas, and in Indian ports such as Bombay.



“Sultana”, one of the most famous ships in the Omani fleet during the reign of Sultan Saeed, was equipped with 14 canons weighing 312 tons.



Muscat city during the reign of Sultan Said Bin Sultan



Zanzibar during the reign of Sultan Said Bin Sultan



The Reign of AlBusaidis:

Oman Navel Fleet during the reign of Sultan Saeed bin Sultan

⚓ The first Omani Ambassador to USA, Ahmed Bin Al-Numan Al-Kaabi, arrived in the Port of New York on the ship “Sultana” on April 30, 1840.



Ship “Sultana” in New York carrying onboard the Omani Ahmed Bin Al-Numan Al-Kaabi in 1840 (painted by Professor Harp Ambassador er Johnson)

⚓ The ship “Sultana” was sent on a second trip to London in 1842 carrying onboard Ambassador Ali bin Nasser Al Busaidi, presenting the gifts of Sultan Saeed bin Sultan to Queen Victoria on the occasion of her coronation.



Ship “Sultana” in the river Thames onboard the Omani Ambassador in 1842



Types of Omani Ships

Oman has known many types of boats and ships throughout history, each type is build to suit use in trade and military. Among the most famous types:

- ☼ The Sasha boat
- ☼ Majan ship
- ☼ Sultana ship
- ☼ Sanbooq
- ☼ Kambari sanbooq
- ☼ the Houri boat
- ☼ Bateel warwhip
- ☼ Bateel fishing boat
- ☼ Baqara fish
- ☼ Ghanja ship
- ☼ Baghla ship
- ☼ Zawarqah
- ☼ Galboat and Shooi ships.





Types of Omani Ships



Sultana Ship



Bateel Warship



The Baghla



Sailing

- ☙ Omanis were skilled sailors.
- ☙ Their sailing experience and knowledge enabled them to identify routes, directions and dangers surrounding them.
- ☙ Stars were not their only navigation guide, they studied color and depth of the sea, the smell of fish and different bird species to indicate location and direction.

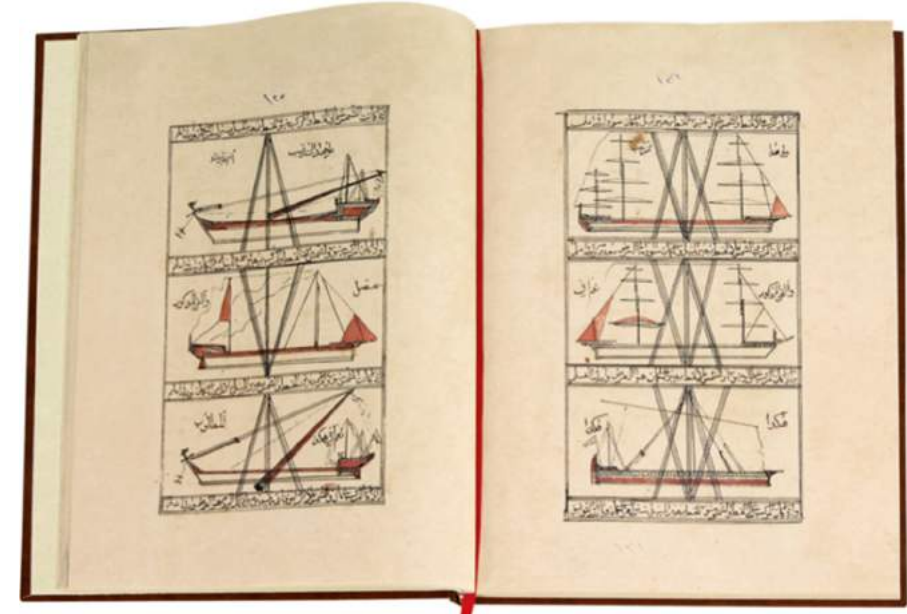


Omani Sailors using navigation tools



Famous Omani Sailors and Navigators

Manuscript in Marine Sciences (a'Nooniyah Al-Kobra: Principles of Marine Navigation) Ahmed bin Majid



“The Secrets in Marine Science”, one of the most important manuscripts in marine science and maritime navigation, by the Omani scientist **Nasir bin Ali Al-Khuduri**, listed in the UNESCO's Memory of the World Program in November 2017.



Ahmed bin Majid bin Mohammed Al-Saadi-the most prominent historical figure in navigation and marine science, discovered the maritime route connecting the east coast of the African continent to India, Ceylon and Java.



The Blessed Renaissance (1970)



The Sultanate oversees one of the most important waterways in the world “Strait of Hormuz”



The Omani Navy witnessed continuous development



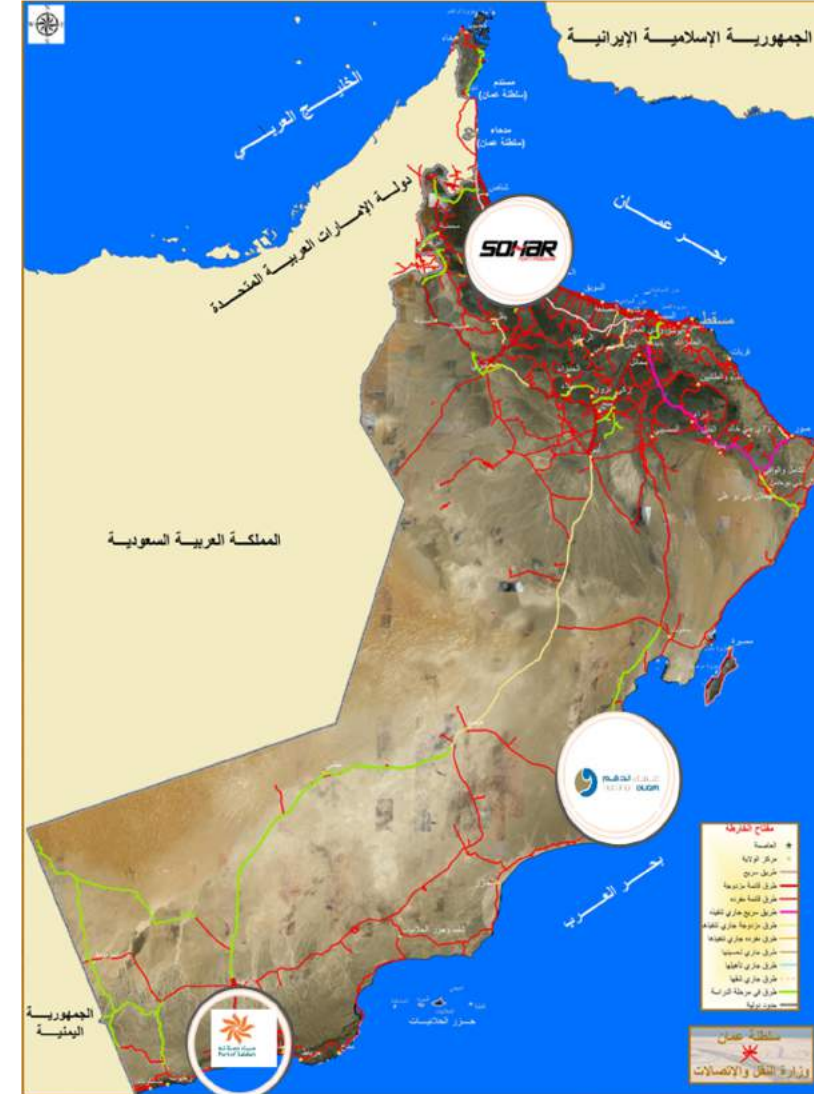
Military naval bases have been established along the Omani coasts



Academies were established to provide support at this side.



The Sultanate sought to build and develop modern commercial and industrial ports and harbors to play a significant role in Oman’s economic development, such as Port Sultan Qaboos, Port of Salalah , Port of Sohar, Port of Duqm, Port of Khasab and Qalhat LNG Port, as well as many fishing harbors and traditional ships factories in Muscat, Sur, and Salalah.





The Blessed Renaissance (1970)

- ⚓ One of the most developed ports in the region located in the north of the country near the Strait of Hormuz, close to the markets of Iran, Pakistan and West India (Investments worth US \$ 26 billion)
- ⚓ Currently handling about 825 thousand TEUs (2018).
- ⚓ 51 million tons of general cargo in (annually).
- ⚓ Organized according to the following divisions:
 - Hydrocarbons, petrochemicals and plastics.
 - Iron, steel and aluminum.
 - Foodstuffs.
 - Vehicles.
- ⚓ Deals with 14,000 TEU vessels and ready to handle vessels loaded with 20,000 TEUs.
- ⚓ Direct contact with Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.
- ⚓ Deep berth for large commercial vessels (18 meters).





The Blessed Renaissance (1970)



Duqm Port and Economic Zone is located on the southeastern seaboard of the of Oman overlooking the Arabian Sea and the Indian Ocean with the largest economic zone in the Middle East that include light and heavy industries, an oil export terminal and an integrated petrochemical complex.



The port covers an area of 188 square kilometers.



1,600 Mtr container terminal and a capacity of 3.5 million TEU/year.



300 meters long general cargo station.



Planned petrochemical complex.



Mineral and bulk capacity is 5 million tons per year.



World Military Logistics Center.



Dry dock for ship maintenance.





The Blessed Renaissance (1970)



Salalah Port is one of the most important transshipment container hub and cargo terminals in the region and the southern commercial port of the Sultanate.

- ⚙ 10.71 square kilometers Freezone.
- ⚙ Provides the fastest transit time to Europe and Asia by 32% shorter than other ports.
- ⚙ Gateway to the markets of Yemen and Africa.
- ⚙ Connecting to Europe, USA, Asia, India, Africa, Red sea, Upper Gulf.
- ⚙ Organized according to the following clusters:
 - Manufacturing.
 - Logistics and distribution services.
 - Administrative facilities, retail outlets, resorts and residential buildings.
 - Multimedia center for land, sea and air ports.





The Blessed Renaissance (1970)

A world-class waterfront development:

- ☼ In Muscat's historic tourist zone.
- ☼ Cruise ship berths.
- ☼ 5 and 4 star marina hotels.
- ☼ Fisherman's wharf, fish souq and historic souq.
- ☼ Waterside restaurants, cafes and boutiques.
- ☼ Conference and banquet facilities.
- ☼ World-class wellness spa.
- ☼ Offices, entertainment and cultural facilities.
- ☼ Super yacht and leisure boat marina.
- ☼ Hotel operated branded residential apartments.
- ☼ Starter apartments for first time buyers.

Port Sultan Qaboos Waterfront (Muscat)





The Blessed Renaissance (1970)



شركة عُمان للجوِّف الجاف
OMAN DRYDOCK COMPANY





The Blessed Renaissance (1970)

- ✪ In celebration of Oman's maritime history, in 2008, the government of Oman and the government of Singapore cooperated to rebuild “the Jewel of Muscat” ship.
- ✪ In February 2010, the Jewel of Muscat started its historical journey and sailed from Muscat using the ancient trading routes to Singapore in 138 days. It is Sultan Qaboos’ gift to the people of Singapore as a symbol of the Omani-Singaporean friendship.



Jewel of Muscat ship



The Blessed Renaissance (1970)



UNESCO organized a historic expedition after His Majesty Sultan Qaboos granted using his the Royal Yacht “Fulk Al Salamah”. The expedition named "Pathways of Dialogue among Civilizations", sailing more than 27,000 k from Venice in Italy to Osaka in Japan, and visited 27 historic ports, and carrying onboard around 100 scientists and 45 journalists from 34 countries.



In 5 October 2017, “Fulk Al Salamah” started voyage from Port Sultan Qaboos to the ports of Zanzibar, Dar Essalam, and Mumbasa to strengthen the friendship relations of these countries.



The Royal Yacht “Zinat Al Bihaar” sailed to may Arabian, Asian, and European ports, and it participated many international forums.



Fulk Al Salamah Voyage



Zinat All Bihaar Voyage



The Blessed Renaissance (1970)



Oman was and still is a cradle of maritime navigation and a land of peace, love, harmony and friendship for all people and nations.



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